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TAGS: MASS, ET, US

SUBJECT: U.S. ARMS FOR ETHIOPIA

THERE FOLLOWS PRESS GUIDANCE PREPARED AUGUST 26 FOLLOW-
ING PUBLICATION OF OTTAWAY ARTICLE IN WASHINGTON POST.

Q. THE WASHINGTON POST HAS REPORTED THAT WE ARE
AUGMENTING SALES OF ARMS TO ETHIOPIA. WHAT ABOUT IT?
WHY? DO WE REALLY THINK SOMALIA IS THREATENING ETHIOPIA?

A. I AM NOT PREPARED TO DISCUSS SOMALIA'S INTENTIONS.
HOWEVER, BEGINNING IN THE SECOND HALF OF 1972 INCREASED
SOVIET MILITARY DELIVERIES TO SOMALIA DISTINCTLY ALTERED
THE RATIO BETWEEN THE ARSENALS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES.
AS SOMALIA PUBLICLY CLAIMS CERTAIN AREAS OF ETHIOPIA
THIS DEVELOPMENT PRESENTED BOTH SHORT AND LONG RANGE
PROBLEMS AND CAUSED SERIOUS CONCERN WITHIN THE ETHIOPIAN
GOVERNMENT WHICH CAME TO US FOR ASSISTANCE IN IMPROVING
ITS DEFENSIVE CAPABILITY.

WE DECIDED TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO THIS APPEAL FOR TWO
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PRINCIPAL REASONS:

1) OUR LONGSTANDING FRIENDSHIP WITH ETHIOPIA AND THAT COUNTRY'S PAST COOPERATION WITH US IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA (KOREA, THE CONGO);

2) THE FACT THAT THE ALTERED ARMS RATIO WAS A DESTABILIZING FACTOR IN THE REGION WHICH WE WANTED TO COUNTERACT.

WE ARE DOING WHAT WE CAN WITH A MODESTLY INCREASED GRANT AND ARMS CREDIT PROGRAM. THE ETHIOPIANS HAVE REQUESTED AUTHORIZATION TO MAKE CASH PURCHASES OF US ARMS WITH THEIR OWN MONETARY RESOURCES IN ORDER TO MEET WHAT THEY CONSIDER TO BE THEIR MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS AND THIS SUBJECT HAS BEEN UNDER DISCUSSION BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS.

Q. DID THE SECRETARY OF STATE OVERRULE STATE/PENTAGON VIEWS?

A. NO. THE DECISION WAS REACHED THROUGH NORMAL INTER-DEPARTMENTAL PROCEDURES WHICH INVOLVE THOROUGH CONSIDERATION OF ALL RELEVANT FACTORS. THIS DECISION WAS TAKEN IN APRIL, NOT IN MAY, AND INDEED, THE SECRETARY PARTICIPATED IN IT.

Q. IS IT REALLY DESIRABLE FOR A POOR COUNTRY LIKE ETHIOPIA TO BE SPENDING ITS MONEY ON ARMS?

A. WE DEPLORE, AS MUCH AS ANYONE, SUCH A USE OF SCARCE RESOURCES, ANYWHERE AT ANY TIME. THE FACT REMAINS THAT THE SUDDENLY INCREASED ARMS SUPPLIES TO SOMALIA FROM THE SOVIET UNION BROUGHT ABOUT A NEW SITUATION IN THAT REGION. WE UNDERSTOOD THE ETHIOPIANS' CONSEQUENT CONCERN AND WE DECIDED IT WAS IN OUR INTEREST TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

Q. AREN'T WE GIVING THIS ARMS AID TO A REGIME WHOSE FUTURE IS AT BEST UNCERTAIN?

A. IN MAKING OUR DECISION ON THIS ISSUE WE WERE NOT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ESPECIALLY CONCERNED WITH EVOLUTIONS IN THE FUTURE FORM OF THE GOVERNMENT THERE, BUT ONLY WITH ETHIOPIA AS A NATION AND ITS NATIONAL INTERESTS. WHILE THERE MAY SEEM TO BE SOME REEXAMINATION GOING ON THERE OF THESE NATIONAL POLICIES WE ARE PROCEEDING ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT ETHIOPIA'S BASIC ORIENTATION IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA WILL CONTINUE TO RESPOND TO CONSTANT NATIONAL INTERESTS AND REMAIN SUBSTANTIALY AS IT IS NOW, REGARD-

LESS OF CHANGE IN THE INTERNAL SCENE.

Q. WHAT IF IT DOESN'T?

A. WE KEEP ALL OUR PROGRAMS, NO MATTER WHERE, UNDER CONSTANT REVIEW TO MAKE SURE THAT THEY CONTINUE TO SERVE THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH THEY WERE INTENDED AND CONTINUE TO BE IN THE US INTEREST.

Q. WHAT ARE THE DIMENSIONS AND THE COMPONENTS OF THE INCREMENT IN OUR ARMS SUPPLIES TO ETHIOPIA?

A. I AM NOT AT LIBERTY TO DIVULGE THAT AT PRESENT. CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF THE FINAL PACKAGE ARE STILL UNDER REVIEW. AS I SAID PREVIOUSLY WE HAVE MADE A MODEST INCREASE IN OUR COMBINED GRANT AND CREDIT ASSISTANCE IN THE MILITARY FIELD AND, IN ADDITION, ARE DISCUSSING

ADDITIONAL PURCHASES OF US EQUIPMENT WITH ETHIOPIA'S OWN MONETARY RESOURCES.

Q. WHEN DID SOMALIA MAKE CLAIM TO OGADEN?

A. SINCE 1960 SOMALIA HAS MAINTAINED THAT PORTIONS OF ETHIOPIA AND KENYA, CONTAINING LARGE SOMALI POPULATIONS, BELONG TO SOMALIA.

Q. WHAT HAS ETHIOPIA ASKED FOR, AND WHAT HAS BEEN DELIVERED SINCE THEIR REQUEST?

A. 1) ETHIOPIA HAS ASKED FOR SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNTS OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT FOR DEFENSIVE PURPOSES. IT WOULD NOT BE APPROPRIATE TO DISCUSS THE DETAILS OR THE MIX OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ITEMS IN THE REQUEST.

2) IN RECENT WEEKS DELIVERIES OF SOME OF THESE ITEMS HAVE BEEN MADE.

Q. WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE EMPEROR'S REQUEST AND THE U.S. DECISION?

A. IN CONTINUING DISCUSSIONS WITH THE IMPERIAL ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT OVER THE PAST 15 MONTHS THE INITIAL REQUEST HAS BEEN SIGNIFICANTLY MODIFIED. OUR RESPONSE HAS BEEN CONDITIONED BY SUCH ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS AS AVAILABLE FUNDS, LEGISLATIVE RESTRICTIONS, THE AVAILABILITY OF ITEMS THEMSELVES, AS WELL AS OTHER FACTORS.

Q. ARE WE DEALING WITH THE SAME GOVERNMENT THAT ASKED FOR THE WEAPONS?

A. THE REQUEST FOR ARMS HAS BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THREE SUCCESSIVE PRIME MINISTERS AND HAS HAD THE CONCURRENCE OF THE ARMED FORCES COORDINATING COMMITTEE.

Q. ARE THERE NOT VARIOUS QUESTIONS WITH REGARD TO CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL?

A. THE EQUIPMENT UNDERWAY COMES OUT OF FUNDS ALREADY APPROVED BY CONGRESS FOR FY 74. ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT WILL BE PROVIDED IF CONGRESS APPROVES THE FY 75 REQUEST FOR GRANT DELIVERIES AND FMS SALES. ADDITIONALLY, THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT IS INTERESTED IN PURCHASES FOR CASH.

Q. IS THE DOLLAR FIGURE AN INCREASE?

A. BEYOND THE AMOUNTS PREVIOUSLY CITED IN THE FY 74 AND 75 BUDGET REQUESTS TALLING APPROXIMATELY \$38 MILLION, AT THIS STAGE IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO PREDICT THE SIZE OF THE TOTAL ARMS PACKAGE SINCE WE DO NOT KNOW THE EXTENT TO WHICH ETHIOPIA WILL BE PURCHASING ARMS WITH ITS OWN FUNDS.
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Q. WHAT HAS CAUSED THIS REQUEST?

A. A SERIOUS IMBALANCE OF ARMAMENTS IN THE AREA HAS CAUSED IT, PRIMARILY BY STEPPED-UP SOVIET ARMS DELIVERIES TO SOMALIA SINCE MID-1972.

COMMENT: SOMALIAN AMBASSADOR CALLED DEPARTMENT SHORTLY AFTER APPEARANCE OF OTTAWAY STORY TO EXPRESS HIS "DEEP DISAPPOINTMENT." HE HAD BEEN ASSURING HIS GOVERNMENT, HE SAID, THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS NOT "FUELING AN ARMS RACE IN THE HORN OF AFRICA" AND NOW IT APPEARED THAT HE HAD BEEN MISLED." TO EXPRESS HIS DISAPPOINTMENT PERSONALLY HE REQUESTED A MEETING WITH EASUM LATE NEXT WEEK. KISSINGER

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